

1 SENATE BILL NO. 489

2 INTRODUCED BY ELLIOTT, P. CLARK, COONEY, SHOCKLEY, WHEAT

3

4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT DESIGNATING U.S. INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS ~~FROM THE~~
5 ~~MONTANA-IDAHO BORDER THROUGH WESTERN MONTANA, SOUTHERN MONTANA TO THE~~
6 ~~MONTANA-WYOMING BORDER, AND EASTERN MONTANA TO THE MONTANA-NORTH DAKOTA BORDER~~
7 IN MONTANA AS THE "PURPLE HEART TRAIL"; AND AMENDING SECTION 60-2-242, MCA."

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9 WHEREAS, on August 7, 1782, at his Newburgh, New York, headquarters, George Washington devised
10 a badge of distinction to be worn by enlisted men and noncommissioned officers; and

11 WHEREAS, the badge, named the Badge of Military Merit and patterned in the "figure of a heart in
12 purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace or binding", was awarded for "any singularly meritorious action",
13 permitted the wearer to pass guards and sentinels without challenge, and required the honoree's name and
14 regiment to be inscribed in a Book of Merit; and

15 WHEREAS, after the Revolutionary War, no more American soldiers received the Badge of Military
16 Merit; and

17 WHEREAS, the valiant efforts in 1927 by Army Chief of Staff General Charles P. Summerall to revive
18 the Badge of Military Merit ultimately failed in Congress; and

19 WHEREAS, on January 7, 1931, Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur pursued a new medal
20 that the War Department formally announced on February 22, 1932; and

21 WHEREAS, after the award was reinstated, recipients of a Meritorious Service Citation Certificate during
22 World War I, along with other eligible soldiers, could exchange their award for the Purple Heart; and

23 WHEREAS, Army regulations at the time defined the conditions of the award as "a wound which
24 necessitates treatment by a medical officer and which is received in action with an enemy, may in the judgment
25 of the commander authorized to make the award be construed as resulting from a singularly meritorious act of
26 essential service"; and

27 WHEREAS, the award of the Purple Heart still represents the thoughts reflected in George Washington's
28 orderly book dated August 7, 1782: "The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is thus open to all."

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30 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

